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PREPARATORY COMMITTEE FOR
THE FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY
OF THE UNITED NATIONS
Drafting group
Third meeting
7 March 1994

OBSERVANCE OF THE FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE UNITED NATIONS

Note by the Bureau of the Preparatory Committee

1. At the conclusion of its second meeting, held on 17 February, the drafting group requested the Bureau to prepare a note reflecting the discussion that had taken place at that meeting and suggesting ways in which the work of the drafting group might be developed.

2. In his summary at the conclusion of the debate, the Chairman said that consensus seemed to have emerged around the following five main points:

(a) The Declaration must address the ordinary people of all countries. A distinction must be drawn between people and bureaucracies. It must be in clear language;

(b) It must not be grandiose;

(c) It must have substance;

(d) It should be based on a thematic approach;

(e) The drafting group needs to prepare a document which reconciles brevity and substance and should be driven by the need for ordinary people to understand and appreciate it, without it being merely platitudinous.

3. It should be recorded that another very important point attracted consensus during the meeting, namely that all decisions by the drafting group should themselves be by consensus.

4. With respect to the structure of the draft Declaration there was widespread support for a proposal put forward, initially by Mexico, that the declaration should consist of three main parts; a review of past work and achievements, an analysis of the present situation, and a vision of the future of the United Nations.

5. A number of those who participated in the debate also highlighted the main issues addressed in the purposes and principles chapter of the Charter, that is, peace, equality, justice and development. They said that the Declaration should in some way address each of those concerns.

6. It was also emphasized that the theme adopted for the anniversary, "We the peoples of the United Nations - united for a better world", should guide the drafting of the Declaration.

7. There was a discussion of the relationship between the Declaration and the outcomes of other major global meetings held recently or to be held prior to the fiftieth anniversary. The consensus seemed to be that the Declaration should take account of those outcomes but not mention any meetings by name or deal with their outcomes in detail. Consistent with what is recorded above, the Declaration would advert to those outcomes only thematically.

8. This note does not purport to give an exhaustive summary of views expressed. Certain States and groups of States indicated that they would be giving further consideration to the matters at issue and would express the outcome of those considerations at a future meeting of the drafting group.

9. At the next meeting of the drafting group, delegates may be able to make further progress in the work by beginning to suggest what sorts of issues or headings might be covered in a "past, present and future" structure of the Declaration.

10. Another approach which might be taken is suggested in the attached skeleton (see annex). It is not incompatible with a three part structure as suggested by Mexico, but it adds the particular point of reaffirming the purposes and principles of the Charter.

Annex

1. Characterization of the event.

2. Reaffirmation of the purposes and principles of the Charter.

3. Need to implement the Charter in modern and relevant ways.

4. Peace.

5. Equality.

6. Justice.

7. Development.